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**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (currently amended) A vacuum cleaner, comprising:
  - a housing including a nozzle assembly and a canister assembly;
  - a dirt container connected to said housing, said dirt container having a side wall and including a collection chamber and a combined handle and inlet flow passageway spaced from said sidewall;
  - an airstream conduit for conveying a vacuum airstream from said nozzle assembly to said inlet flow passageway; and
  - a fan and motor assembly for generating said vacuum airstream and drawing dirt and debris through said airstream conduit and said inlet flow passageway into said collection chamber.
2. (original) The vacuum cleaner of claim 1, wherein said dirt container is connected to said canister assembly.
3. (original) The vacuum cleaner of claim 1, wherein said inlet flow passageway includes a delivery port in communication with said collection chamber.
4. (original) The vacuum cleaner of claim 3, wherein said collection chamber is substantially cylindrical in shape and said delivery port is oriented substantially tangentially with respect to said collection chamber.
5. (original) The vacuum cleaner of claim 1, wherein said dirt container includes a filter and a discharge outlet.

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6. (original) The vacuum cleaner of claim 5, wherein said dirt container further includes a prefilter extending at least partially across said collection chamber between said filter and a floor of said dirt container.
7. (original) The vacuum cleaner of claim 6, wherein said prefilter includes at least one airflow passageway in a face of said prefilter between an inner edge and an outer edge thereof.
8. (currently amended) A dirt container for a vacuum cleaner, comprising:  
a housing having a sidewall and including a dirt collection chamber; and  
a combined handle and inlet flow passageway spaced from said sidewall.
9. (original) The dirt container of claim 8, wherein said dirt collection chamber is substantially cylindrical in shape.
10. (original) The dirt container of claim 9, wherein said inlet flow passageway includes a delivery port oriented substantially tangentially and in fluid communication with said dirt collection chamber.
11. (original) The dirt container of claim 8, wherein said dirt container further includes a prefilter extending at least partially across said collection chamber.
12. (original) The dirt container of claim 11, wherein said prefilter includes at least one airflow passageway in a face of said prefilter between an inner edge and an outer edge thereof.

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13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)